

The Guinda Indian School



The Guinda Indian School is operated by the Northern California Indian Association and is located near the village of Guinda, Yolo County, California. For many years the Association and Indian Friends generally had hoped for an Indian Industrial Training School, which should make its chief effort to train Indian leaders for the Indians of California, with special reference to their moral, ethical, and religious needs. The Government schools are excellent, and if they covered the field, there would be less need for such a school as was planned by the Indian Association. Unfortunately, the Government



FROM THE DINING-ROOM WINDOW.

schools have capacity for not much more than twenty per cent. of the Indian children of school age in this State, and four-fifths of our Indians are non-reservation. In the State or public schools, racial prejudice has debarred many, and somewhere between thirty and forty per cent. of the Indian children of Northern California are not in school and can get into no school.

Inasmuch as the Indian children come from pagan homes, with no knowledge of the better side of civilization or of Christianity, their need of moral instruction is great, and as anything even remotely suggestive of religious teaching must necessarily be avoided in the public and Government schools, the Indian children are at a great disadvantage in comparison with their white companions, who are all given some sort of religious training outside the school. It therefore seemed to the Indian Association that there was here

a need for Indian education that amply justified them in establishing the Guinda Indian School.

The Association began collecting funds in 1910, but was unable to open the school until July, 1913. The school farm consists of 483 acres of land, largely hill land of value chiefly for grazing and wood. The buildings are located upon a mesa, or tableland, having a nearly level surface of some thirty acres, lying about 100 feet above the Capay Valley. The site is very fine and the view extensive. The Association has planned all buildings to be plain; nothing beyond what the Indians themselves may hope to have in their own rancherias. The buildings consist of a Superintendent's cottage, which is at present used as a girls' dormitory, also; a building containing dining-room, kitchen, and pantry; a laundry with boys' wash and bathroom; a boys' dormitory; a barn; hog pens; chicken-houses; the water system consists of two 4,000-gallon tanks, into which water is pumped by a gasoline engine. The water is excellent and the supply seems inexhaustible. A sewer system with septic tank has been constructed. The pump is so arranged that the valley land can be irrigated directly from the pump. There is a school garden, where vegetables, potatoes, etc., are raised. About six acres are in alfalfa. About twenty-five acres additional land is available for hay and other crops. An orchard of about six acres has been planted. A few orange and lemon trees on the slope near the buildings are doing well. The land is wholly paid for. The buildings and equipment cost about \$9,000, all paid for. The Association has \$5,000 in hand for further buildings, but very little for maintenance. As the donors gave the \$5,000 for buildings and equipment, the Association has not felt justified in using it otherwise. The capacity of the present buildings is about twenty-five pupils. So far we have not had sufficient money for carrying on the school to fill it to its capacity. Hence it has not been necessary to put up further buildings. We plan in the near future to put up an open-air class, or assembly room. With the funds in hand we think we can increase the capacity to sixty or seventy.

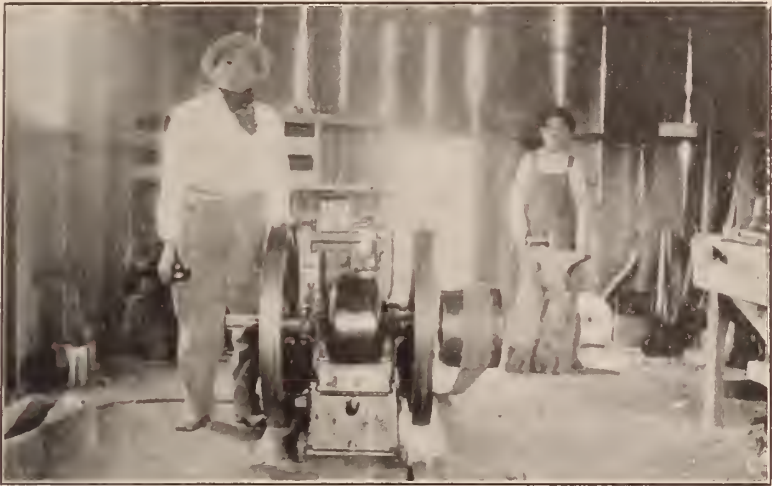
The school opened in July, 1913, with six pupils. There are now eighteen, which is about all for whom we have the funds for maintenance. We could fill the school twice over any day if we had the money to care for them. We could doubtless take more pupils and trust to raising more funds, but we have preferred the less spectacular, but safer method of keeping out of debt. The Guinda School does not owe a dollar.

The funds for maintaining the school are raised from various sources, chiefly from contributions from friends. We have been successful in placing scholarships of \$100 each with various individuals, churches and societies. Eleven such scholarships are now current.

Mr. Charles A. Olsen is superintendent and his wife is matron. We think we have been exceptionally fortunate in securing the services of these people. They have been with us from the first, and the school, as it stands, is largely their creation. Mr. Olsen has built all the buildings, the water supply and sewer system, etc., with little but Indian labor. Both Mr. and Mrs. Olsen have proved exceptionally capable, all-around executives. The school has been carried on very economically.

The school farm is largely grazing land. We have not been able to stock it fully, as yet, but the increase in the herd will do this in a few years more. At present we have about twenty-five head of cattle, of whom about half are dairy cows. When there is a surplus of cream, it is sold to creameries in the neighborhood. When the farm is fully stocked, it should furnish about one beef a month for the use of the school, and such butter and milk as is needed, with a small surplus to sell. We also expect to raise, as we are now doing largely, sufficient vegetables, hay, potatoes, fruit, eggs and chickens for the use of the school.

The curriculum is largely industrial. Every attempt is made to teach the Indian children the things which they will have to do when they go home, with the tools they are likely to have there. We try to teach them to be of the highest value to their people when they return, to do the things their



IN THE SHOP.

people will want done. In short, we aim to qualify the pupils for leadership in the future. This leadership will not be wholly material. We aim to give them and we think we are giving them, the very best homelike religious training in a very homelike religious atmosphere. The school is undenominational, as is the Indian Association. All churches are represented in the management.

The following was received from a prominent Indian educator, who has had many years' experience with the government and other Indian schools:

"While writing to you, I want to say that I visited your school at Guinda a few days ago, as I was up in that locality on other business and had some leisure time while waiting for a train. I was most favorably impressed with Mr. and Mrs. Olsen and with the work they are accomplishing with limited means. I feel that the trip to their school was of particular benefit to me, as

it gives me courage to urge upon day schools, that I may have occasion to report upon, the possibilities of industrial work even with small boys and girls. I hope your society may succeed in building up there a good-sized institution, as the plan is certainly calculated to give most practical training to Indian boys and girls, and I believe your society has been extremely fortunate in securing the services of these particular people, as the success of such an institution depends wholly upon the people you have in charge."

THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA INDIAN ASSOCIATION.

MRS. J. FRED SMITH,
President.

C. E. KELSEY,
General Secretary.

What Our Friends Think of the Guinda Indian School.

By EUNICE T. GRAY.

(In the San Jose Mercury.)

WE VISITED the Indian Industrial School on a perfect September day—cloudless, golden and fragrant with the odor of ripening figs and grapes, blooming alfalfa and sunburnt fields. The road from Winters to Guinda is through a level country with wide pastures, fertile fields and green orchards, a rich valley tapped early in the history of California by the Southern Pacific Railroad. Senator Stanford had such hopes for this section of the State that he laid out towns and encouraged his employees to invest along its line. A large hotel was built at Esparto, and there was every indication that the road would be the main line from San Francisco to Portland. But traffic turned the other way, and it became Winters branch, terminating at the head of the Capay Valley, at Rumsey, a few miles south of Clear Lake.

A year ago the Yolo Water and Power Company bought right-of-way along this line, put in a cement ditch, a million-dollar dam, a million-dollar bulkhead in Lakeport, and is bringing Clear Lake water to the thousands of rich acres south, turning them into green fields which are to feed the stock for the thousands of newcomers even now on their way to California.

PURCHASE OF SCHOOL SITE.

When the Northern California Indian Association decided to establish an industrial school for young Indians, they began looking for a piece of land which would be near the Indian settlements and which would be a comfortable home and a profitable, workable ranch. Through the advice of Mr. C. E. Kelsey the committee visited this valley and decided that the section on the

hills above Guinda was just what they wanted, and they purchased a tract of 483 acres and proceeded to erect simple buildings suitable for the home and school.

We reached Guinda about noon, a campaign automobile was drawn up in front of the corner grocery. It was significant that among the score of listeners two Indian women, with 'kerchiefs over their heads, stood intently listening to the well-groomed, earnest but perspiring young orator.

We reached the gate of the school about noon and halted in the shade of an oak for our lunch. The sun was intense and we had a fellow sympathy for the figs that lay shriveling in the sun.

A well-made road, built by the Indian boys under their superintendent, Mr. Olsen, led us around the hill and out on a level plateau, where the superintendent's house and the school and dormitory stand. A cool breeze swept



IN THE DAIRY.

down the cañon, and there were wide, shady places, the coolest spot we had encountered that day. We were greeted with warm cordiality by Mr. and Mrs. Olsen, who made many protests because we had not come there for lunch, or at least a cup of tea.

Mrs. Olsen has the entire work of the school upon her shoulders for a few days; the teacher was away upon his wedding trip. She seemed equal, however, to being housekeeper, hostess, teacher and adviser. We rested for a time upon the cool porch of the home, looking out over rolling hills and the lovely Capay Valley, dotted with almond and fig orchards or gleaming with the stubble fields of barley.

MR. OLSEN'S PLANS FOR SCHOOL.

Mr. Olsen told us his plans for the school. He and the boys had been planting lemon trees on the south hillside that morning, and he hoped to

put in an almond orchard on a protected flat, half way down the east slope. He spoke of the possibilities for raising a living for the school from the land, which would at the same time train the boys in farm methods and the conservation of the land.

It was pleasant to hear these two speak of their work for and with their Indian children; practical, wholesome, ambitious talk, with an undertone of kindness far removed from the sordid talk of gain for gain's sake, and yet free from false sentimentality. Surely, this is the kind of training our boys and girls need, whatever be their race.

The Guinda School provides home life, industrial training and Christian principles. It is the clear, sound note of morality, the gentle spirit of love, which distinguishes it from other schools, and it is this which the Indian Association has felt it was necessary and wise to work and strive for, and it is by this that the school will fail or succeed.

We visited the school, a large, airy building with a schoolroom, a kitchen and a pantry. Mrs. Olsen asked the class to read for us, but the girls were exceedingly shy, and their voices were almost inaudible, but, after ten minutes of brisk physical exercises under the leadership of a tall, slim half-breed, the school lost its excessive self-consciousness, and the pupils glanced up at us shyly, studying our faces with a slow intent expression as if to read there some of the things that seemed so hard to understand.

FOND OF MUSIC.

But the key to the hearts seemed to be music from the time that they sang in soft, mellow voices two hymns with the accompaniment of a cottage organ to the grand finale of the farewell serenade by the boys' band, they seemed to feel that we were friends, a part of the family.

My sister told the story so frequently related by the late Rev. Mr. Wakefield of the missionary influence of a brass band upon the Matahatla Indians in Alaska, which pleased Mr. Olsen tremendously.

"Ah, yes, music is a great thing. We have had the instruments only a month, yet the boys think the whole day of the practice hour that evening. There is nothing they love so, nothing that brings them all together like that."

We saw the day's baking, rolled in a fresh cloth in the clean kitchen, a spotless pantry and shining pans, the work of the ten Indian girls, all of whom had lived a year ago in the most primitive of Indian camps. We visited their cool, airy sleeping quarters in the upper story of the superintendent's house. We were shown the boys' dormitory, a large one-room building under the oak trees in the rear, and it all seemed the simple, substantial beginnings of an institution which will be a useful factor in the country life of the State, a little oasis of peaceful, contented living in the midst of a hurried, troubled social desert.

As we were served with great bunches of delicious Tokay grapes in the cool dining-room, we were told a few stories of the life of this little family, full of both humor and pathos.

During our visit we were attracted by a lovely little Indian girl, who seemed to be having unusual freedom and privileges. She had come a few

days ago with her father and two brothers from the Mendocino County Government reservation. The children had been pupils in the Government school, whose \$40,000 school building had been burned to the ground by some dissatisfied boys.

"Gee, ain't this a lot better'n our school," one of the boys had remarked to his father after band practice. "I used to get a lickin' every day, and sometimes two."

Far be it from the Olsens to decide whether the lickings were deserved or not. The boys had been put immediately in training with the others, but little Marguerite, an unusually quick child, was basking in the sunshine of Mrs. Olsen's affection and a new hair ribbon.

FAREWELL BY THE BAND.

We were given a spirited farewell by the band. School hours over, the boys stationed themselves on Mr. Olsen's steps and, under his leadership, ran



GROUP OF PUPILS.

scales, time exercises and variations on march themes till they finally rose to the grand climax of a waltz in which the two stout boys' cheeks were veritable balloons. The "bad" boy from Mendocino tin-a-ling-tanged the triangle without missing a count, and the drummer was absolutely militant. Mr. Olsen's two young sons came home from school in time to assist with the waltz, but even with their help we knew that the Guinda Indian School Band was a fore-ordained success. How many San Jose schoolboys could play a waltz from a music book with a three weeks' acquaintance with notes and instruments?

Our last view of the school was of the score of girls and boys under the big oak tree in front of the schoolroom, waving their hands to us as if we

were all old friends, of the Collie yapping a joyous farewell, and of "Mary's" fat, contented lamb who had, true to the good old story, been sleeping on the doorstep of the school the entire afternoon.

Two notes dominate the harmony of the Guinda School—patience and peace. Patience with the dormant, slow-growing minds and souls in its care, and the peace which comes with love and faith.

The nucleus of a band fund (second-hand instruments) was given by an Indian Association in Connecticut and the remainder was contributed by a charitable young lady of Berkeley.

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